

Ad Hoc Farmland Preservation Plan Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes
October 13, 2011

Meeting began at 7:02 PM.

Introductions of planners Jon Bartz & Ken Jaworski. Introductions of committee members.

Brief overview of the work plan for the next 15 months. See attachment.

Discussed that Towns should submit comprehensive plans to Sam for inclusion in Farmland Preservation Plan. Deadline is December 25, 2011.

Covered bullet points from agenda.

1. Specialty Uses – Organic is very small percentage.
Predominant uses are as follows:
 - Dairy, grain and beef, for retired farmers
 - Canning crops on West side of County (Ripon, Oakfield, Mayville & Fairwater)
 - East half of County is mostly dairy
 - West half of County is mostly crops

UW-Extension also has a “cow map”. See Mike Rankin for more information.

2. Ag. Resources – More consistent yields are in West side of County due to all Class One soil with the right amount of sun and rain. Development pressure is down the last couple of years. Ag. land prices are higher the past few years at \$4,000 to \$6,000 per acre for ag. land sales, currently. West County sales are higher than East. House lots are going for \$20,000 for 1.5 acres while subdivided lots are \$40,000 +. Ledge land in Byron & Oakfield has fractured bedrock and shallow soils. There are also abandoned farmsteads without proper well abandonment. Hard and sulfur water resources available in the West side of the County affects cows, but it's not a big issue.
3. Key Ag. Infrastructure – Canning companies, warehouse space.
Ripon's big grain goes by road from farms to two key grain elevators, then by rail to markets. Semi-truck hauling in support of ag. is a road issue.
Milk goes to Waupun, Brownsville, Fond du Lac, Chilton, Forest (Baker Cheese) & Kewaskum. Rosendale Dairy goes primarily to Appleton. Roads are critical for large herd operations.
4. Value Adding on Farms – Kelly's Country Creamery, goat herd in Calumetville. Not a big growth area in County. Fond du Lac County will remain a commodity based farm economy. Makes it even more important to preserve large tracts. 4,000 – 5,000 head herd is the optimal herd size. Three acres per cow is about the balance for feed and nutrient spreading.

5. Significant Trends – No big changes except prices. Support industries are consolidating; farm implements, grain elevators, feed operations where feeds are mixed, vets, replacement calves coming up.
6. Conversion of Ag. Lands – GHRA competing for ag. land. Conversion to residential is way down. Land is not going fallow, it's being rented, cropped and/or dairied.

Meeting ended at 9:05 PM. Next meeting date is November 10, 2011 at 6:00 PM.